

## **Letter of Agreement**

### **Supporting Dually Adjudicated Youth and their Families in Arizona**


The undersigned Arizona partners are committed to helping at-risk youth in Arizona reach their highest potential by supporting them, and by strengthening their families and communities. In order to fulfill this mission, the partners will demonstrate continued support for and commitment to implementation of the Interagency Practice Protocol for services to Dually Adjudicated Youth and their Families. The partners agree that:

1. Partnerships based on interagency collaboration and family involvement are essential to the timely and effective delivery of services to youth and families.
2. Arizona requires a sustained and effective statewide collaboration between professionals and family members to fully address the complex needs of dually adjudicated youth and their families.
3. Effective collaboration and partnerships will result in:
  - Better coordinated responses to youth involved in child welfare, behavioral health, juvenile justice systems and family support agencies;
  - Fewer moves and placements of youth in out-of-home care;
  - Increased number of youth living in home-like and community-based settings geared to ensure the child's success;
  - Reduced frequency of delinquent behavior;
  - Reduced number of younger siblings who enter the juvenile justice system;
  - Strengthened youth and families; and
  - Safer communities.
4. Early identification and intervention will:
  - Reduce the number of children in out-of-home care who are experiencing delinquency problems;
  - Reduce the risk of abuse and neglect to children in families experiencing multiple stressors; and
  - Reduce the number of children who have suffered abuse and neglect and who later become involved in delinquent activities.
5. Continuous education and training will be required to partner agency staff, administrators, youth and families, as well as the public in general.
6. The Framework for Interagency Practice Protocol is designed to create expectations for all state, county and local offices that are implementing agency specific procedures.
7. Partner agencies, including our own, may have legal mandates and/or may manage specific entitlements on behalf of qualifying individuals. All signing agencies understand that such entitlements and mandates are part of what their respective agencies offer to at-risk children and their families. Services and supports that are covered by an agency's entitlement programs or legal mandates will be provided by that agency when indicated and are the financial responsibility of that agency. Behavioral health services must be consistent with best practice, medical necessity, and for services that require prior authorization criteria must be met.

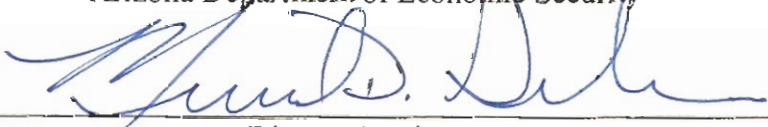
8. Each participating partner agency will strive to develop and maintain adequate capacity to meet the identified needs of their legally mandated and/or entitlement services.
9. Each participating partner agency is committed to developing systemic changes to support the Framework for Interagency Practice Protocol.
10. Each participating partner agency is committed to ensuring that all staff/contractors are familiar with and follow this Protocol.
11. Nothing in this agreement is intended to negate any existing Memoranda of Understanding (MOUs), Intergovernmental Service Agreements (ISAs), regional letters of agreement or cross-system protocols. This agreement is, instead, intended to support and complement such existing agreements.
12. This agreement will be reviewed at least yearly by the Dually Adjudicated Steering Committee and revised as necessary, based on the recommendations of the participating partner agencies by agreement of the undersigned:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Director/Designee  
Arizona Department of Health Services

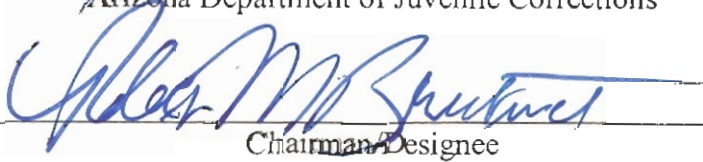
1/3/07  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

  
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Director/Designee  
Arizona Department of Economic Security

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Director/Designee  
Arizona Department of Juvenile Corrections

1/03/07  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Chairman/Designee  
Committee on Juvenile Courts

1/5/07  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

We value our supporting partners who include:  
Children's Action Alliance  
Arizona Center for Law in the Public Interest  
MIKID  
Family Involvement Center  
Arizona Council of Human Services Providers

## Framework for Interagency Practice Protocol

The goal of the Interagency Practice Protocols is that all Arizona's youth and families with multiple needs will have access to a coordinated set of services, tailored to their needs. To accomplish this, the various agencies and systems serving dually adjudicated children and youth must work together to eliminate systemic barriers on an organizational level so that individualized services can be planned and delivered to youth and families in need. Before this can be achieved, the following elements must be in place:

*Note: A County approach is utilized as the court system that determines both delinquency and dependency is administered at the county level. It is acknowledged that the behavioral health and child protective system operate at a regional level with most regions including multiple counties. This may require participation on multiple teams or an agreement among the County Courts that their issues are similar enough to combine efforts into one team.*

- 1) Every county will have available a process for involving youth and families in the identification of service needs and service delivery. **If a behavioral health Child and Family Team exists, this team will be used to meet this purpose.** If no team is in place, a team will be created that includes youth, parent/guardian, current caregivers, any individuals important in the child's life, and current service providers and agency professionals responsible for providing and monitoring services. Agencies involved may include any combination of the following: Juvenile Probation, Arizona Department of Juvenile Corrections, Child Protective Services, Regional Behavioral Health Authority and Adult Probation and Adult Parole. The purpose of this team is to:
  - Engage the child and family in identifying their strengths and service needs
  - Develop individualized service plans based on identified needs that are consistent with best practice
  - Engage the child and family in decision making
  - Develop and monitor effective implementation of the individualized plan of care and services
  - Review and make decisions about supports and services needed including any necessary recommendations for placement/living arrangement.
  - Identify, resolve pertinent issues, and reach consensus in service planning in order to support the accomplishment of identified goals
  - Utilize case consultation and conflict resolution when barriers to reaching consensus have been identified.
  - Prevent further penetration of the child into the delinquency system.
  - Prevent placements in highly structured settings when community based care is available and appropriate.
- Participants in Case Planning Teams (whether behavioral health Child and Family Teams or alternative team structure for youth without Behavioral Health system involvement) agree the following practices.

- All agencies will consult with the child and family team or other multi-disciplinary teams prior to a recommendation to terminate services.
  - All Court actions shall be shared in a timely manner with the child and family team and with relevant partner agencies.
  - Decisions will be made within the team setting unless there are extenuating circumstances which prevent this shared decision making. However, all decisions related to the provision of covered behavioral health services must be made within the context of the child and family team with the exception of services that require prior authorization.
  - All actions/decisions made by involved agencies that occur outside the child and family team process will be communicated to the Court and to all partner agencies as they occur.
  - The Probation representative or the Child Protective Services representative (whichever is case lead) will communicate the child and family team plan to the court so that the case judicial officer has this information available for consideration when making decisions about the case.
- 2) Every county will have available an interagency team which has the purpose of addressing systemic issues and which includes at a minimum, lead staff representing Juvenile Probation, Juvenile Corrections, Child Protective Services, Behavioral Health Services, who are authorized by their agency to make decisions that commit agency resources on behalf of youth and families and family representatives who can represent the experience and needs of the target youth and families. ( Recommended participants in interagency teams include the Director of the Juvenile Court, Presiding Juvenile Court Judge, CPS District Program Manager and RBHA CEO. If an existing interagency team or collaborative already exists, it will be used for this purpose. Existing teams with appropriate membership may also fulfill this purpose.) Each team will meet on a regular basis and will address administrative issues related to:
- Barriers to service delivery including funding and placement issues
  - Systems Accountability
  - System Reform
  - Family Involvement across agencies
  - Other issues which support the enhancement of the collaboration.
- In support of the collaboration, the interagency team will:
- Identify at least one contact in each county to serve as a liaison to the partner agencies.
  - Develop a training plan which ensures current and future staff are educated as to the interagency practice protocol within 90 days of the start of their employment.
  - Provide professional staff and professional parents to assist in the delivery of training within agencies and to the public, as needed.
  - Assist in the identification and referral to appropriate team process for dually adjudicated youth and their families
- All juvenile court hearing officers (judges and commissioners) will be informed of existence and purpose of the county interagency team and the means to access the interagency team and opportunities for training.

## AGENCY RESPONSIBILITIES

TASK	C O U R T	P R O B A T I O N	C P S	R B H A	A D J C	F A M I L Y	E D U C A T I O N	A D U L T P R O B
<b>Individual Case Team Process</b>								
Lead Child and Family Team for youth who are receiving behavioral health services				X				
Participate in Child and Family Teams	✓	X	X	✓	X	X	X	X
May be designated as team lead for youth who is not receiving behavioral health services		X	X		X			
Participate in planning team when youth or family has involvement in this system	X	X	X	✓	X	X	X	X
Inform Judges & Commissioners about Interagency Teams	X							
Consult child and family or other multi disciplinary team before terminating services	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Share court actions with appropriate team.	X							
When possible, make decisions for youth and families within the team structure.		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
When decisions occur outside the team structure, deciding agency will communicate the action to the Court and other partner agencies	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Team lead will disseminate copies of the plan to all members of the team.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
The Probation representative or the CPS representative (Case lead) will communicate the plan to the court.		X	X					
<b>Systemic Team Process</b>								
Lead County System Improvement Team as designated by the County Team	X	X	X	X				
Participate in System Improvement Team	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Develop Training Plan which insures staff are trained on interagency protocols	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Provide professional staff and parent to assist in the delivery of training within agencies and to the public	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

\* RBHA or designated representative

X Entity will participate

✓ Entity will participate as appropriate to individual case



**THE SIGNATORIES TO THIS DOCUMENT AGREE THAT THE FOLLOWING  
ARE BEST PRACTICES IN THE COORDINATION OF SERVICES FOR  
CHILDREN INVOLVED IN BOTH DEPENDENCY AND DELINQUENCY AND  
AGREE TO STRIVE TO FULLY IMPLEMENT THESE PRACTICES**

<b>COURT:</b>	<p>Inquire about family's involvement with other partner agencies by asking the CPS and Probation/Parole managers about collaborative services.</p> <p>Encourage the assignment of the same attorney to represent the minor in delinquency and dependency matters except in unusual circumstances. Use of private or 'conflict' counsel should be utilized to assign the same attorney where different offices generally represent delinquent versus dependent youth.</p> <p>Combine appropriate delinquency and dependency hearings when both matters are proceeding simultaneously.</p> <p>Require that a representative from CPS and Parole/Probation be present at every dependency and delinquency hearing in which a decision about the dually adjudicated youth may be made. Other partner agencies should be invited to all hearings and may be required to attend as may be necessary.</p>
<b>CPS/ADJC/JPO:</b>	<p>Intake/investigation process will include questions regarding prior/current partner agency involvement.</p> <p>Engage/refer youth to Child and family team meeting if indicated in initial assessment of youth and family (i.e. existence of multiple stressors such as lack of employment, housing, behavioral health needs of youth and/or other family member, etc.)</p> <p>Notify partner agencies of any contemplated or actual changes in the child's placement.</p> <p>When requested, provide partner agencies with household information on current or past involvement with agency.</p> <p>Provide consultation and/or participation in collaborative review, as needed.</p> <p>CPS/ADJC/JPO will be present at every dependency and delinquency hearing in which a decision about the dually adjudicated youth may be made. Other partner agencies should be invited to all hearings and may be required to attend as may be necessary.</p> <p>ADJC will notify the guardian (CPS) of all revocation or other Administrative hearings where decisions about the child are made, and provide information and recommendations from the involved CPS staff to the assigned hearing officer.</p> <p>Work cooperatively with assigned staff from partner agencies to support the</p>

<b>CPS/ADJC/JPO:</b>	<p>youth's compliance with the case plan, diversion and/or probation services, and/or parole.</p> <p>Provide partner agencies with notice of all routine and other planning meetings and dependency hearings, and participate in all delinquency hearings.</p> <p>Continue the child and family team process while youth is in secure care.</p>
<b>BHS/RBHA:</b>	<p>Participate in collaborative review providing technical assistance as needed.</p> <p>Make preliminary determination of youth and family's eligibility for Title XIX services.</p> <p>Upon referral the Regional Behavioral Health Authority shall complete a Comprehensive Assessment of the child and shall focus on immediate presenting problems, safety and collaborative services planning consistent with best practice and medical necessity.</p> <p>Initiate child and family teams.</p>
<b>FAMILIES:</b>	<p>Serve as an active partner in statewide collaborations and partnerships.</p> <p>Provide technical assistance to statewide agencies in order to increase outcomes for children and families.</p> <p>Represent the voice of children and families to state agencies.</p>